

THE EDITOR

RECENTLY the Academy of Medicine of the city of Rochester, New York, has been agitating the subject of medical inspection in the public schools. We are humiliated to have to acknowledge that the Commissioners of Education in this city have not received this proposition favorably, and the two leading newspapers have denounced it as being a scheme to secure salaried positions at public expense for medical men. A paper on this subject read by Dr. W. M. Brown, president of the Pathological Society, before the Academy of Medicine brought out many points along the lines of Miss Hay's paper in the Educational Department. From a general summing up of his paper we quote the following:

"At present medical inspection of the public schools is carried on in Boston, New York, Jersey City, Philadelphia, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Salt Lake City.

"In Boston the salary is two hundred dollars per year each for fifty inspectors, averaging fourteen thousand pupils and four schools to each inspector. In New York the salary is three hundred dollars each for two hundred and six inspectors, with an average of two thousand pupils and two schools for each inspector. Salt Lake City has but one inspector, at a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars per month. Milwaukee pays fifty dollars per month.

"The infected list in New York is three per cent. of those examined. In Jersey City it is eight per cent.

"In all cities where this system prevails the rate of infectious disease has been decreased, as also has the death-rate."

Dr. Brown shows that the largest percentage of infectious diseases is among the school-children and during the school months, and he further says:

"Investigations have shown that there are at home and unreported three cases of infection for every one properly reported and isolated. Twenty per cent. of scarlet fever and measles cases leave a greater or less degree of deafness. Seven per cent. of measles cases die. Twelve per cent. of diphtheria cases die. Do our children and our homes need protection?

"The child is a racial unit. We may protect our racial integrity by protecting the children. The right of a child to hygienic surround-

ings, physical as well as mental, is paramount. Efficient and thorough medical inspection of the pupils in our schools, together with the education which such a system of medical inspection would be to the teachers, pupils, and parents in matters of hygiene and general health, must necessarily go a long way towards that ideal prophylaxis which will eradicate most disease from our midst.

"This work of medical inspection began in Boston in 1894. . . . In a school in Boston in 1897 fourteen cases of diphtheria occurred in one room. The majority were found by the inspector. Not one case developed after these were found and controlled.

"In Newark, New Jersey, five and a half per cent. of the pupils examined were infected. In St. Louis five per cent. were infected.

"In New York in one district during three weeks fourteen cases of infectious disease found in the school led to the detection of thirty-seven cases at home unreported. In eighty-five families visited where a child was absent from school forty-four cases of scarlet fever and diphtheria were found. Another inspector found eleven cases of scarlet fever, all arising from one case of so-called German measles."

Dr. Brown in conclusion says: "I believe, with Hall Caine, that this is to be a 'century of humanity,' that consumption will be wiped out, and that cholera and cancer will no more be known, or other infectious diseases."

THE meeting of the New York State Nurses, of which the official report is given on another page, marks an era in nursing history. Not more than half-a-dozen of the older women who have in the past been prominent in organization work were present, but the convention was made up of a younger generation of nurses, who showed a sense of dignity, intelligence, and general poise that promises much for the development of the New York State Society, and the broader progress of the profession at large, in the years to come.

The vital question of eligibility will be the subject for discussion at the next meeting in Buffalo, and during the months that are to intervene much serious thought must be given to the question. Registration will not be taken up until the society is complete in its organization, and in efficient working order.

THE papers on "Contagion and Disinfection" have crowded out some of the department matter this month, but we shall go on in the next number with Miss Hibbard's article, "With the Maine to South Africa," and we have for the immediate future a number of interesting papers by well-known writers, one by Dr. G. H. M. Rowe, of the Boston

City Hospital, on the management of hospital laundries, being most interesting and valuable.

We want to urge upon alumnae officers the importance of interesting the scattered society members in the JOURNAL, and the need of having the subscription blanks always at hand at the regular meetings. We find that where the president is interested the members are sure to be, and subscriptions are greater in number from such societies.

WE have on our list the names of a number of superintendents and nurses who are ready for hospital positions, and we would like to hear from institutions which are contemplating changes. To those nurses who have not received personal replies to their letters we must take this way of explaining that the positions advertised last month have been filled, but we have placed their names on file for future reference.



DURBAN NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

